



Purple Sage Elementary PTA Veggie Tasting Garden

Project Goals

- Promote healthy eating by allowing students to grow and eat their own vegetables.
- Improve attitudes about trying new vegetables.
- Provide hands-on science learning by incorporating mini-lessons on topics such as plant needs, germination, proper garden soil, good garden bugs, vegetable nutrition, and horticultural careers.
- Encourage responsibility by giving each student his or her own square foot garden plot, allowing him or her to choose which vegetables to plant, and scheduling daily visits to water and care for the garden.

Lessons Learned

- Start small. We piloted our school garden with a single third grade class, and this enabled us to experiment on an easily managed scale.
- Get knowledgeable volunteers. Our volunteers from the Master Gardeners Association provided invaluable guidance regarding preferred vegetable varieties for our area. The volunteers also helped provide bi-weekly mini-lessons, which kept students engaged during the growing season.
- Plant as soon as you can. In order for vegetables to have enough time to mature during the semester, plant them as soon as possible, according to freeze dates and local guidelines.
- Expect trial and error. Gardening is part skill and part luck. Treat setbacks as learning opportunities. We planted a spring garden, but some of our cold-weather crops did not fare as well as we would have liked due to the unusually warm winter. We hope to try a fall garden next semester.

How To Replicate/Sustain

- Start by getting your campus administration's support and identifying a teacher sponsor.
- Contact your County Master Gardeners Association, Junior Master Gardeners, and Agri-Life, County Extension Service for guidance. The Junior Master Gardeners Curriculum is in many school libraries and is a great resource.

Contact Information

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Students were given their own square foot garden plot to tend throughout the semester.



Volunteers from the Williamson County Master Gardeners provided mini-lessons on plant needs and nutrition.



Students checked on their vegetables daily, watering and recording progress in their science journals.



The Veggie Tasting Garden was spotlighted during our campus' Math and Science Night.



We celebrated our student gardeners by awarding Biggest Veggie awards.



RRISD Head Chef Jeff Moll gave a salad and homemade vinaigrette demonstration. We prepared salad samples for our entire third grade student body using vegetables grown in our school garden.